

What is claimed is:

1. A method of providing promotional material to consumers comprising:
 - establishing a computer communications session between a merchant computer system and a remote computer system;
 - reading consumer purchase information from said merchant computer system, said consumer purchase information comprising consumer identifying information and product information;
 - based on said consumer purchase information, identifying one or more consumers in need of one or more products;
 - in said remote computer system, associating said promotional material corresponding to said one or more products with said identified consumers; and
 - making said promotional material available to said identified consumers using a promotional material delivery system.
2. The method of claim 1, said identifying step further comprising determining a product consumption rate from said consumer purchase information to identify said one or more consumers in need of one or more products.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of reading consumer purchase information is responsive to a merchant request.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of reading consumer purchase
2 information is responsive to detecting a business necessity in an inventory
3 management system.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said consumer purchase information is read
2 from a purchase history database.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein said one or more products include goods or
2 services or both.

1 7. The method of claim 1, said product information comprising product expiration
2 information and product identifying information.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein said promotional material made available to said
2 identified consumers is in electronic format.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein said promotional material made available to said
2 identified consumers is in printed format.

1 10. A system for providing promotional material to consumers comprising:
2 a shopping stimulation logic unit for identifying one or more consumers in need
3 of one or more products, and for identifying a business necessity; and,
4 a promotional information database, accessible by said shopping stimulation
5 logic unit, for storing promotional information relating to said one or more products.

1 11. The system of claim 10, further comprising:
2 a consumer purchase information data structure for storing consumer identifying
3 information and product information corresponding to a purchase transaction.

1 12. The system of claim 10, further comprising:
2 a commerce system for collecting said consumer purchase information in a
3 computer communications network environment.

1 13. The system of claim 10, further comprising:
2 a point of sale system for collecting said consumer purchase information.

1 14. The system of claim 10, further comprising:
2 a merchant inventory management system for interfacing with said shopping
3 stimulation logic unit.

1 15. The system of claim 10, further comprising:

2 a delivery system for delivering promotional material associated with said one or
3 more products to said one or more consumers.

1 16. A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having
2 a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to
3 perform the steps of:

4 establishing a computer communications session between a merchant computer
5 system and a remote computer system;

6 reading consumer purchase information from said merchant computer system,
7 said consumer purchase information comprising consumer identifying information and
8 product information;

9 based on said consumer purchase information, identifying one or more
10 consumers in need of one or more products;

11 in said remote computer system, associating said promotional material
12 corresponding to said one or more products with said identified consumers; and

13 making said promotional material available to said identified consumers using a
14 promotional material delivery system.

1 17. The machine readable storage of claim 16, said identifying step further
2 comprising determining a product consumption rate from said consumer purchase
3 information to identify said one or more consumers in need of one or more products.

1 18. The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said step of reading
2 consumer purchase information is responsive to a merchant request.

1 19. The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said step of reading
2 consumer purchase information is responsive to detecting a business necessity in an
3 inventory management system.

1 20. The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said consumer purchase
2 information is read from a purchase history database.

1 21. The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said one or more products
2 include goods or services or both.

1 22. The machine readable storage of claim 16, said product information comprising
2 product expiration information and product identifying information.

1 23. The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said promotional material
2 made available to said identified consumers is in electronic format.

1 24. The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said promotional material
2 made available to said identified consumers is in printed format.